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SOME RELATIONS OF THE HARDWARE MAN TO COMMUNITY

ADDRESS BY G. J. RICHARDSON, PRESIDENT OF THE WEST VIRGINIA RETAIL HARDWARE ASSOCIATION, AT PARKERSBURG.

This is a world of multiplied relationships. We have business relations, social relations, educational relations, etc., and besides there are home relations, relations to the community, state country and the whole world.

To find one's true relation to all of these things and to nobly maintain it is the conquest of a lifetime.

Perhaps the greatest question with us today is whether we are going to be mere "peddlers" or "real factors" for commercial elevation. It is a miserable thing for one to do who lives his life within four walls and goes out from dingy windows day after day, content to eke out a miserable existence all his days.

Yet it is an easy habit for one to form by being so self-absorbed as to lose track of business progress, the change of business methods, and the needs of one's own customers, until we lose our best trade, while we merely "plod on."

To the hardware man who is wide awake there is a chance for forming the most cordial and influential relationships, perhaps more so than with any other class of merchants, because the articles he sells are the most lasting.

Among the many things of interest which belonged to my father and around which cling pleasant memories, there are none more interesting than the old steel trap and rifle. Also among the carpenter tools are saw and hammer, and chisel, bought long before I was born.

We come to regard the man who sells us goods of proper quality and honest value as a man of principle and character. A man who is truly a friend.

To find our true relation to the community and the world at large and to elevate commercial life has led to what we might term the evolution of the merchant; which in turn has developed into different classes of merchandising specialists. Not many years ago most of the business of this country was carried on by peddlers and through state and county fairs. Buyer and seller were at war with each other. Meeting once and never expecting to meet again, they proceeded "to do" each other to the extent of their ability. These methods of business were supplanted by the general merchandising establishment, and they in turn have been supplanted by men who specialize on some one or two branches. We are representatives of that class of men who sell the most durable class of merchandise, and the kind that most surely tells the story of its own worth.

In order to succeed in the business in which we are engaged there are many things which we must give the most careful consideration, and without which success is well nigh impossible. The first of which I shall mention is a knowledge of men in general, and this is not to be a mere superficial knowledge, but one that thoroughly analyzes the elements that enter into the temperament and life of men. We must study the environments of our customers, their peculiar needs and method of doing business. Likewise, in every community there is the problem of learning individual peculiarities. Often times we may either gain or lose a valuable customer, simply by learning the peculiar personality of the man and catering to it.

Again I wish to remind you of the absolute necessity of an honest study and thorough knowledge of the goods for which you demand the public's money. It is a crime to be ignorant and a convicted criminal to be an ignorant hardware man, for "be sure your sin will find you out."

If you will pardon a personal reference and one which taught me a lesson I shall not soon forget I will tell you of a certain farmer

to whom an inexperienced clerk of mine sold a cast iron tack hammer for a farrier's hammer. My attention was called to the incident, but not until after the man had gone, and it afterwards proved, had gone to stay. More than a year had elapsed before I saw him again, and then not in my store, and he stated that I should not likely see him there again on account of the tack hammer incident. I afterwards learned that this same farmer in the interval that had elapsed had spent more than a thousand dollars for goods that I could easily have sold him—but he preferred not to trust our intelligence, or our honesty, or both. Thus you see how a small error innocently made, may prove costly, and jeopardize confidence, without which, business is reduced to a game of the unscrupulous.

The whole truth is, that the hardware business is a teacher of moral lessons. In order to make a positive statement about your goods you must have a thorough knowledge of their quality, their fitness for the purpose intended and for the purpose for which they are purchased; otherwise you stand condemned in the eyes of your customers, by the words of your own mouth.

Then the equipment necessary in order to maintain our true relation to the community may be briefly summed up as follows:

(1) We must have a thorough knowledge of men and merchandise in general and know our own customers in particular, their needs and their dispositions.

(2) You must know your goods, their quality and fitness for the needs of the community.

Thus having studied equipment let us turn to the conduct of business. We may not only fail for the lack of good guidance without, but for the lack of it within. Business is not only a question of brains but also of motives. As one may know how to do things properly, and yet do them not.

It is an age long axiom and a truth worth preserving that "honesty is the best policy," and thus to speak of honesty is to pay it half tribute, for honesty is the only "policy." There may be other methods but no other policy. The only policy if we want to make dollars, the only policy if we want to elevate the community. By honest dealing we make friends and other things being equal the man who has the most friends will make the most money. It is poor policy indeed for any man to make a sale if by so doing he acquires an enemy, though that enemy is but a simple, unimportant man, because the more ignorant the person we cheat the more powerful organ they become in advertising our dishonesty.

Again there are many merchants who insist on selling goods to men that they do not want, this is poor policy, if not downright dishonesty, for though the quality may be right and the price right, yet if our goods do not supply a felt need of our customer he feels himself to have been the victim of a shrewd tongue of a selfish salesman. "There must be reciprocity in every deal or there is dishonesty in it." Truthfulness is but a subordinate branch of the more general term honesty, and we may announce that in the hardware business "Truthfulness is the only policy" and it must be intelligent truthfulness, for by the quality of your axes and guns and saws you shall be known, and according to their correspondence to your representations shall you be justified or condemned and thereby making or losing business.

To tell an untruth does even greater injury; it degrades us in the estimation of men and degrades business to mean levels; and after all the maintenance of our true relation to the community is not to be measured by the dollars we gain, but by what we make ourselves in our labors for others. You can help yourself by helping others, and if we are ever to take the place to which we are called, and where we will occupy our highest relation to our community

we must do so by ministering to the needs of others.

Taking for granted that all the members of this association have the necessary equipment as far as the general knowledge of men and goods are concerned and that all are applying intelligent honesty in our business dealings, I pass to the mere mention of some other smaller considerations that make for our success.

Polliteness is by no means an unnecessary thing for business men to exercise in this age of sharp competition. Men do not care to do business with the man who is grum or who cannot make them feel at home in his presence or place of business.

Patience is another virtue badly needed in our business, and divers and numerous are the circumstances under which we have opportunity to exercise it.

The provocations of the merchant are many—goods returned and unreasonable demands made, old accounts unpaid, pressing bills to meet, and a hundred other things to provoke one.

The restraints are many—insufficient capital, poor help, lack of floor space, etc. All these things call for patience and without it business will be paralyzed and shipwrecked.

I add but one other suggestion, perseverance.

The Hebrew race is doing the larger volume of the mercantile business of this country today, and the one thing that characterized his business methods more than anything else is his eternal vigilance which has been the price of his business success. To this he has added knowledge of his stock, a politeness and patience that has commended itself, although we might sometime question his motive. Yet through politeness, patience and perseverance he has succeeded in the face of race antipathy and a general reputation for questionable honesty.

The following lines contain a lesson on perseverance that it would be well for each of us to learn:

'Tis the coward who quits to misfortune,
'Tis the knave who changes each day,
'Tis the fool who wins half the battle
Then throws his chances away.
There is little in life but labor
And tomorrow may find that a dream;
Success is the bride of endeavor
And luck but a meteor's dream.
The time to succeed is when others
Discourage; show traces of tire;
The battle is fought on the home
And won twixt the flag and the wire.

Let us not be content to merely "plod on." Leaving business to run on the same plane upon which our father conducted it in ante-bellum days, but let us follow the beacon star of progress, and by the diligent pursuit of the knowledge of men and their needs, of goods, their quality and fitness, and there by we shall become real factors in the world's uplift.

This high attainment shall not be reached by sudden flights or in a single day, but by patience and perseverance in applying an intelligent truthfulness and honesty to a most important branch of our country's industry.

Dead letter list for week ending February 18, 1911.

Dilley, J. O.
Webster, Dayton A.
Carlis: Ruggdell, Robert H.
Trainer, William
4th class: Hall, Hans.
The above if not called for, will be sent to the dead letter office March 4, 1911.

A. S. Overholt, P. M.

C. C. Arbogast, the well known plumber left here Friday and in a few days together with his brother will go to Florida where they will do a big plumbing contract for Mr. Arbogast's brother who has considerable property there.

FOR SALE—One lot on Camden Ave 28x120 suitable for blacksmith or wagon-maker shop, will sell cheap, apply to R. B. Slavin.

EARLY WEST VIRGINIA HISTORY

Prof. V. A. Lewis, State historian and archivist, on Wednesday evening at the hall of the House of Delegates delivered an entertaining and valuable address on "Lost Leaves from Public Documents and History of West Virginia." The address evidenced the painstaking research of the archivist and the true spirit of the historian in his search for fact and truth.

The lecturer commenced by saying that of the various interests of the State he had given the best years of his life to two, viz: The public schools of the State where in he had done the best that he could for the interests of the children, and secondly, to that of rescuing and preserving the history made by the adult life of the State. He reviewed briefly the work of archivists of Europe and then more fully of their work in the various States of the American Union and then took up the main topic of his discourse that of archives and history work of West Virginia.

He spoke of the French explorer La Salle down the Ohio river in 1689 he being the first European who saw any part of West Virginia; of how John Lederer in 1670, with his comrades stood on the crest of the Blue Ridge and looked down upon what is now Jefferson and Berkeley counties; of discovery of the Kanawha Fall by Captain Thomas Batts and party in 1671, when they took possession of the Kanawha Valley in the name of King George II, and how just below the Falls they measured the water to determine the ebb and flow of the tide, which because of the ignorance of geographic knowledge at that time they believed to be from the Pacific ocean; of the crossing of Governor Spotswood with the Knights of the Golden Horseshoe over the Blue Ridge in 1716, when they came down into the Shenandoah Valley and named the Shenandoah river the "Euphrates" and then to the westward beheld the mountains of Hardy and Pendleton counties in West Virginia. Of how John Howard and John Peter Salley in 1742, came down New River to Richmond Falls, then passed over the mountains of what is now Raleigh county and discovered Coal river, which they named "Coa" because of the great quantity of that mineral they found thereon. Of how Bienville De Celeron, commanding an attachment from Montreal in 1749 came to the Ohio River, and at the mouth of Wheeling Creek and the Great Kanawha, buried leaden plates asserting the claims of France to all the territories drained by that river. Or how Christopher Gist, the agent and explorer of the Ohio Land Company traversed backward and forward in 1751, that part of West Virginia between the Monongahela and Great Kanawha Rivers. Of how George Washington, with Col. William Crawford afterward burned at the stake by Delaware Indians in the Ohio wilderness, Dr. Craik, Dan Renden and others visited the mouth of the Great Kanawha in 1770, ascended that river 16 miles and spent the night where the Little Harmony Baptist church now stands on the left bank of that river; and how this was the only visit Washington ever made to the Great Kanawha Valley. He then told of the pioneer settlers in West Virginia: the settlement of Morgan at Morgan on the site of the little village of Banker Hill in Berkeley county in 1726; of how German settlers came from Pennsylvania and in 1727, founded New Mechenberg, New Shepherdstown, in Jefferson county, of how the Rattledred Coburns, Van Meters and others found homes in the valley of the south branch of the Potomac in 1734. How David Tygart and Foyles built their cabin homes near the present site of the Beverly, now Randolph county, in 1753, of how Zachwell Morgan founded Morgantown in 1766; of

the settlement of the McNeils, Kennisons, Clendennins and others in the Little Levels of Pocahontas county in 1769, and of how John Woodruff and Williams and others in Greenbrier the same year of the Nutters at Clarksburg in 1770; of the Zmes at Wheeling in 1770; of Walter Kelley, John Field and William and Leonard Morris on the Great Kanawha in 1772; and Luman Gibbs, Benjamin Eulen, Leonard Coper and others at Pt. Pleasant in 1775.

He told of the time when the struggle raged between France and England for territorial supremacy in the Ohio Valley when the courts of London and Versailles watched with jealous eyes the acts of each other in the New World; how bands of French and Indians from Pittsburg carried death and desolation into the settlements of the banks of the Little Onquon River in the Eastern Panhandle, and how battles were fought between the settler and French and Indians on Great Caconan River in Hampshire county, and on Lost River in Hardy county and of the massacre at Fort Seibert in Pendleton county in 1753.

Speaking of West Virginia's part in the Revolutionary War the speaker told how the men of the old district of Augusta, when they heard the news from Lexington, hastened away to Pittsburg, then believed to be within the confines of Virginia, and there resolved to stand by their brethren of Massachusetts; of how Capt. Hugh Stephenson's company in July, 1775, marched away from Morgan's Springs in Berkeley county now Jefferson, to Boston, 600 miles away, where they joined Washington, these being the first Revolutionary soldiers in New England from the south side of the Potomac; of how the West Virginia frontier men responded to the ten requisitions made upon them—for troops and how their wives and mothers with their own fingers, knit many hundred pairs of socks and made tow linen and linsey woolsey trousers for the men who were marching through the pestilential swamps of the South and over the frozen snows of the North and were thus sacrificing their lives to the founding of the greatest Republic of modern times. And how Capt. John Crockett's company of Berkeley county served with George Rodgers Clark in the conquest of the Illinois country by which it was afterward determined that the Mississippi River and not the Alleghany mountains should be the western boundary of the United States.

In his description of the Indian wars the speaker said that more men, women and children fell victim to the rifle, tomahawk and scalping knife than perished from similar causes in any other territory of like extent in America. He told how Capt. Coburn's company of Harrison county, and Capt. McMechens company of Ohio county, were with Wayne in the thickest of the fight at Falling Timbers on the Maumee River, where in 1794 the savage power in the Northwest was forever broken. Of how at the same time three hundred West Virginians from Harrison, Randolph and Pendleton and Hardy, rendezvoused at Moorefield, in the latter county, marched away with Gen. Daniel Morgan to aid the quelling of the whiskey insurrection in western Pennsylvania.

Speaking of the War of 1812, the lecturer told of how forty-two companies of West Virginians participated in that war, how many hundreds of them leaving their plows in the field, hastened away to Richmond, and how afterward the bones of many of them lay buried in the sands of Norfolk; and how a brigade of 1,400 West Virginians assembled at Point Pleasant and under Brigadier General Joel Leftwich crossed the Ohio River and marching by way Gallipolis and Chillicothe, the present city of Columbus the capital of Ohio, they joined the army

(Continue to the fourth page)

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE GREENBRIER BAR

(From Greenbrier Independent) Editor Greenbrier Independent:

I see by your paper that Mr. John W. Harris is dead. So far as I know there is left but one living member of the Greenbrier bar who practiced in Judge Nat Harrison's Court along in 1866.

It was a notable Bar, and one that at times included in its members a forensic ability and popular influence that will probably never be equalled in the State.

There sat Ex-Governor Price, whose massive frame and strong face made him easily the most conspicuous of the group, a self-made man, whose legal opinion carried more weight with it than any man in the State, and whose honor was never questioned.

Robert F. Dennis was a thoroughly equipped man, the best jury lawyer and the most effective public speaker in the State. He was always approachable, quick at repartee, full of humor and always able to carry the people with him.

Henry M. Mathews, afterwards made Governor, was then struggling to gain a footing, though barred, like all other ex-Confederates from active practice. He was just coming to prime, well developed manhood, educated, polished, handsome as Adonis, was a fluent speaker and full of ambition.

Adam Snyder, afterwards one of the best Supreme Judges the State ever had, was another, with few graces of manner or person and careless in his use of language. All this was fully compensated for by his fine legal mind which could always be relied upon.

No one could fail to see and hear Col. Jas. W. Davis, for he was a warm in private suits. He was a warm-hearted, erratic and emotional man, but he possessed a fine legal mind and was one of the most tenacious and persistent lawyers of his day. By his knowledge of the law and his great determination he acquired a large fortune.

Of all the group, John W. Harris was the most painstaking, methodical practitioner. He always came into court with his papers and his cases ready. Faultless in dress and manners, he was always a well prepared and successful lawyer.

Over from Monroe county came Allen T. Caperton, looking like a Roman Senator, with his courtly manners and distinguished face covered with long flowing white beard. He was afterwards elected to the United States Senate.

From the same place, too, came Frank Hereford, who could practice and talk in defiance of test oaths. This was the opportunity of his life and sent him to Congress a number of terms and later to the United States Senate.

W. W. Gordon, classmate and friend of Governor Mathews, came from Richmond, Virginia. He was polished, silvery toned and convincing in his expounding of the law and ranked as the peer of any man at that time at the Virginia bar.

Alex F. Mathews was then teaching school. He was afterwards appointed receiver of the Court and later commenced the practice of law, developing into one of the ablest and brightest lawyers of the State. By his legal learning and his superior business ability he accumulated and left a great estate.

Col. McPherson was the clerk of the Court, polite, capable and courteous in the discharge of official duties while as a social entertainer at his hospitable home, he had no equal.

In the same old court-house where the able and distinguished Court of Appeals of Virginia once held its sessions, Judge Nat Harrison now presided over the Circuit Court where all these men assembled. Dark of visage, with his gray hair and whiskers dyed black, he usurped the powers of Judge, jury and counsel. He was able but corrupt and mercenary and for a time governed the people

in his circuit absolutely as he pleased.

For a moment let us step out of the court room and note some of the people who rode into town.

There were the elder Arbuckles, the Luddingtons of Frankford, those warm hearted, gracious gentlemen of the Richlands, Charles Peyton and the Stuarts, Jim Jarrett of Muddy Creek, the McClungs and many others, all gentry of the blue grass.

And in the throng there was that lovable and never to be forgotten Dr. Tom Creigh and also Doctors Hunter, Beard and Charles Austin. All these frequented the old court house at Court time and walked upon the streets of Lewisburg through the week and many of them on Sundays wended their way to the Old Stone Church where Dr. McElheny, though exceedingly old, still preached occasionally.

Now every one of these men lie buried in the Old Stone Church yard cemetery or in their own family burying grounds, court and counsel, judge and jury.

All of them are succeeded by worthy descendants or representatives, and yet an old timer cannot help feeling sad that they themselves can never come back.

S.

SUMMER NORMAL

I will conduct a summer normal at Academy, beginning May 8th and continuing eight weeks. Special attention will be given teachers and those who wish to prepare for the Uniform Examination.

I am a graduate of the State Normal School, have had fourteen years' experience in teaching public and high schools, and have taught several summer Normals.

Tuition will be \$6.00 in advance. Good board in private homes can be secured at \$10 and up. For further particulars address,

CHAS. WILSON, Academy, W. Va.

HUNTERSVILLE NORMAL

I will open the Huntersville Normal Review School April 10, 1911, and will continue until the second examination June 8 and 9. If you are going to pass the examination and want instruction from a teacher who has had Marshall College training, get ready to attend this school.

Attention will be given to penmanship on Friday nights free. Hard, earnest work and thorough review is the aim.

Board from \$10 to \$12 per month. Tuition \$6 for term.

For further particulars write me
WALTER M. LYONS,
Huntersville, W. Va.

FALLING SPRING NORMAL

This school will begin at Falling Spring, W. Va., the first Monday in April, 1911, and continue twelve weeks.

We invite all who wish to get the benefit of a carefully and effectively outlined course, to join us.

Our students have been very successful in their work.

Good board will be reasonable. For further particulars write me at Falling Spring, W. Va.

ALEX. THOMPSON.

FOR RENT—Valley Hotel property in Marlinton; fine stand near depot. Apply to Doc Sheets, Seebert, W. Va.

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